

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments, and the following remarks.

The amendments to the claims are as follows. Claim 1 has been amended to change "with the following steps" to read "comprising the following steps."

Also claim 1 was amended to recite the following step:

"- drying the molded articles within 0.5 to 12 hours at temperatures of 40° C up to 150° C".

Support for this step is found in original claim 7 for the drying time of 0.5 to 12 hours. Support for the drying temperature of 40° C up to 150° C is found in original claim 5. Support for this drying time range and this drying temperature range is also found in the paragraph bridging pages 9 and 10 of the present Specification.

Claims 2 to 26 have been amended to cancel the phrase "characterized in that" and to replace it by the word "wherein."

Claim 27 has been amended to include a minor typographical revision. Also claims 5, 7, 10, 15, 18, 20 and 22 have been amended to cancel the phrase "in particular" which was objected to by the Patent Examiner.

For all these reasons, all the claims are now believed to be in complete compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112. Withdrawal of this ground of rejection is respectfully requested.

The Applicants comment upon the prior art rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103 as follows.

The present invention is directed to a method for producing shaped, activated charcoal comprising the following steps:

- grinding one or more carbon-bearing materials;
- homogeneously mixing the milled carbon-bearing material with a water-containing bind agent or a mixture of several binding agents, of which at least one contains water;
- shaping the mixture consisting of carbon-bearing material and binding agent into molded articles;
- drying the molded articles before the carbonization to set the grain structure to up to an overall water weight of ≤ 3% by wt.;

- drying the molded articles within 0.5 to 12 hours at temperatures of 40 °C up to 150 °C;
- carbonizing the molded articles, and
- activating the molded articles by means of an activation gas.

The claims were rejected as being unpatentable over DE 44 16 576 (Bräutigam). With regard to Bräutigam, an amended claim 1 has been filed which distinguishes over the prior art. Contrary to the teachings of the prior art, the claimed invention relates to drying the molded articles at temperatures of 40°C to 170°C, in particular 60°C to 150°C, within 0.2 to 12 hours, in particular with 0.5 to 6 hours. The prior art DE 44 16 576 differs from the invention in that the prior art drying process is performed at temperatures of 150°C to 250°C within 10 to 25 minutes.

Therefore claim 1 has been amended to recite that the drying process is performed at temperatures of 40°C to 150°C within 0.5 to 12 hours.

Although DE 44 165 76 discloses drying the molded articles at temperatures of 150°C to 250°C within 10 to 25 minutes, the essence of the invention is based on the facts, that according to

the invention, the drying process is performed at lower temperatures over a longer required time. DE 44 165 76 provides no suggestion of the invention taking into account all of the features of the drying process according to the claimed invention.

The present invention has further distinctions over the prior art as set forth in the description (see page 10, second paragraph) of the present Specification, as follows:

"Low-volatile compounds and water escape during the gentle drying process, which causes the molded articles to become mechanically fixed. In addition, initial condensation reactions between the sugar molecules of the binding agent take place, in particular when using molasses as the binding agent. As a result, the mechanical fixing of the molded article is also accompanied by a chemical solidification due to drying."

Neither the Caplus abstract, the EP abstract, and the derwent abstract are relevant to the claimed invention.

In summary, claims 1 to 27 are pending and have been amended. In view of these amendments, it is firmly believed that

the present invention, and all of the claims, are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103 over all the prior art cited by the Patent Examiner. A prompt notification of allowability is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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